

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: ELAB, SP, PINT

SUBJ: FORMER MINISTER SOLIS DESIGNATED MINISTER
OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT

REF: MADRID 4079

1. IN SURPRISE MOVE, ONE-TIME CABINET MINISTER AND
PROMINENT REGIME POLITICAL FIGURE JOSE SOLIS RUIZ WAS
DESIGNATED MINISTER SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT
TODAY TO FILL VACANCY CREATED BY JUNE 12 ACCIDENTAL DEATH
OF FERNANDO HERRERO TEJEDOR (REFTEL).

2. SOLIS PREVIOUSLY HELD SAME CABINET POST FROM 1957 TO
1969 IN ONE OF LONGEST TERMS OF A FRANCO CABINET MINISTER.
HE PREVIOUSLY HEADED SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION
(SSO) FOR AN EVEN LONGER PERIOD, I.E., FROM 1961 UNTIL
1969. HE WAS OUSTED FROM BOTH KEY JOBS IN 1969 CABINET
RESHUFFLE WHICH BROUGHT SO-CALLED "OPUS DEI" TECHNOCRAT
TEAM TO POWER. IN RECENT YEARS HE HAS DEDICATED HIMSELF
TO HIS LAW PRACTICE, BUT HAS BEEN POLITICALLY ACTIVE IN HIS
CAPACITY AS NATIONAL COUNCILOR OF MOVEMENT AND MEMBER OF
"CORTES". DURING RECENT MONTHS HE HAS BEEN ONE OF PRINCIPAL
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PROMOTERS OF INCIPIENT POLITICAL ASSOCIATION, "UNION DEL

PUEBLO ESPANOL," FORMED LARGELY FROM NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND FALANGIST ELEMENTS.

3. COMMENT: IN SIXTIES, WHILE STILL HEAD OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND SSO, SOLIS WAS CONSIDERED A MODERATE LIBERALIZER IN CONTEXT OF THAT PERIOD. PERHAPS CHIEF VIRTUE OF CURRENT APPOINTMENT IS THAT SOLIS IS ONE OF FEW REGIME POLITICAL FIGURES WHO IS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH REGIME LIBERALIZERS AND REGIME CONSERVATIVES. ADDITIONALLY, 61- YEAR OLD SOLIS REMAINS A HIGHLY SKILLED ORATOR AND APPEALING POLITICIAN. APPOINTMENT, HOWEVER, OF VETERAN FALANGIST STALWART IS ALREADY BEING SEEN AMONG YOUNGER REFORMIST SPANIARDS AS CONFIRMATION THAT ARIAS GOVT NEITHER INTENDS TO UPDATE MOVEMENT OR INSURE ITS NEUTRALITY IN POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS SCHEME. THIS IS ONE OF FEW TIMES IN FRANCO'S LONG RULE THAT CAUDILLO HAS EVER BROUGHT BACK A FORMER MINISTER TO THE CABINET.

4. PROMPT REPLACEMENT OF HERRERO TEJEDOR BY SOLIS BRINGS TO A CLOSE LATEST CABINET CRISIS. CONTRARY TO SPECULATION, ARIAS DID NOT USE CIRCUMSTANCE OF DEATH OF HERRERO TEJEDOR TO MAKE A BROADER CABINET CHANGE, THOUGH WE UNDERSTAND THAT OPTION WAS CONSIDERED BY ARIAS AND PRIMARY ADVISORS. STABLER

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